

69 West 99th Street
Apt. 4 D
New York City

June 22, 1940

Mrs. Manley
Newark Eagles Baseball Club
Negro National League
Newark, New Jersey

Dear Mrs. Manley:

My favorite team, for some inexplicable reason, is the Newark Eagles, and I am indeed sorry that you are making so many difficulties for them. According to the AMSTERDAM NEWS, you "threaten" to withdraw them for the season from the League, and they certainly will be nothing then. As it is, the only time the colored teams seem to care whether they win or lose is when they play a League game--they don't seem to sense that baseball is a livelihood and the least they can do is to put their best into each game. They can break your heart, the lackadaisical way they slouch out to their places on the diamond, as tho if they had to step once more they would flop. Aging grandfathers!

I saw the worst game I ever saw when the Eagles played the Springfield Grays this season, and last night the "champions" very nearly broke even their record. The score was 9 to 3 in favor of the white team--just awful baseball being offered by the Elite Giants. No one seems to know what's the matter with the teams--the set-up is apparently there, according to the score-card, but boys in the street play stick-ball with more energy and hope. The whole League aggregation is just hopeless, it seems.

The fans at Dexter Park and Sherwood Oval are disgusted. After all, we're the ones who pay to see a game, and we cannot sympathise because the team has traveled to play and is tired--they can stay in Baltimore and points South if they are going to be too tired to play. All we ask of them is that they hold the ball when they do make contact with it, that the pitcher should pitch and the catcher catch--things anyone expects for their money.

You are vociferous about the Kansas City Monarchs invading the East and playing the white circuit. Well, the fans are about at the end of their rope and any colored team

Mrs. Manley

2p

6/22/40

that even attempts to take one game of a doubleheader, that plays night baseball as well as it drinks and carouses at night, that pretends to care about put-outs, holding the ball, etc.--in fact, that gives the fans a play for their money and time, is going to be hailed East, West or South.

It may be true that the teams are tired, but so are the fans at a night-game. We have been working all day, have to travel miles to see these games, go dinnerless, sit in the chilly dew without moving and without coats, have to watch foolish baseball until way way into the night, have to again catch buses and travel miles in stuffy subways--most of all we have to pay, and what do we get? Not even sympathy because we each one become disgusted with the other fans that they should keep hoping to see a game where the colored teams hope to win as much as the white. It would be a revelation to you of the lack of racial prejudice if you sat and heard the white fans continue to be loyal to the colored teams, even tho they are getting no satisfaction--the teams play as tho they are in a daze, all except the Homestead Grays, who at least laugh at their crazy plays, when made. Even the umpires get awfully tired.

So who is Satchel Paige that you should desire him as tho he were God Himself? Aren't there other pitchers in this whole wide United States of America, even maybe in South America? There must be some growing up. Maybe if the rest of the team would encourage them, one other pitcher as marvellous as he's supposed to be, would emerge. I don't think he's so marvellous--I guess he too is often too tired from traveling to pitch. He must have been the time he came from Trujillo and pitched against Taylor at the Stadium here.

The Mohawk Giants of Schenectady have an even better pitcher in Davis. I like young players--everyone is provoked at Scales continuing to play and failing in an emergency, at Holland pitching around his stomach, at stiff, lazy, conceited players no matter where--at fielders too old or stiff to catch a ball without falling down--if they can run to attempt the catch, can't they continue in balance? Or do they just feel like falling in a fit, as we fans do? Negro baseball is just a lot of huey, I begin to feel, all publicity. If they win a game it's news.

So let the teams come in from the West--from anywhere. From Germany, if they can play and aren't too tired. Why cannot the Eagles play the Bushwicks--some other funny reason like your pique at the Yankee Stadium? Or is the journey too far and they would be tired?

Copy to AMSTERDAM NEWS

" " BLACK YANKEES BASEBALL CLUB

Yours for Negro baseball, if any

Hazel M. Wigden